



Lesbian, Gay & Bisexual Caucus

of the American Art Therapy Association

THE PINK TRIANGLE STORY*

Everyone knows about the Holocaust, during World War II that took more than six million Jewish lives. But many do not realize that other groups also were targeted for extinction, including the mentally retarded, Gypsies, and homosexual men and women. Nearly a quarter-million gay men and lesbians perished in Hitler's death camps.

Prisoners were forced to wear identifying symbols on their sleeves. People of Jewish descent were identified by a yellow Star of David. Homosexual men and women were branded by a pink triangle. Today, it is a symbol of liberation and pride worn on buttons, lapel pins, tee-shirts, even car bumpers to remind gay and lesbian people of the oppression they have suffered historically and to signal their refusal to be silent victims again.

There is a story that relates directly to the witness we invite you to make today. When Denmark fell to the Nazi armies in 1940, the German occupation authorities immediately decreed that all Jews wear the yellow Star of David on their sleeves at all times, to facilitate their identification for transit to concentration camps. Legend has it that the very next morning King Christian X, the again Danish monarch, came out of the palace for his morning walk wearing a yellow Star of David on his coat, thus expressing his solidarity with the persecuted minority. Word quickly spread about this silent and non-violent act of defiance and soon many other Danes were wearing the symbol on their sleeves. Though historians disagree about the actual prevalence of this simple act of Danish resistance, there is no doubt that the population's compassion and resistance contributed to the fact that almost all of Denmark's Jews survived the barbarism of the holocaust that took the lives of most European Jews.

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Dear Members of the Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Caucus,

Last year at the AATA annual conference a small group of Gay men, Lesbians and Bisexuals met to formulate an agenda for this year's Las Vegas conference. Themes such as "Coming Out," addictions in our community, Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual families and sensitivity training for heterosexual practitioners were proposed for workshops at this year's conference. Hats off to AATA for taking the risk particularly in a volatile political climate when the rights of Gay men, Lesbians, Bisexuals, and Arts Professional have become threatened with loyalty clauses by the NEA and efforts like Oregon's Measure 9, an ordinance that has been proposed by right wing fanatics that would rescind the civil rights of gay men, Lesbians, and Bisexuals.

It is particularly important that Art Therapists explore the issues that affect us in treatment and understand the affect homophobic attitudes have on therapists and clients in the treatment process. Just as it is important to understand cross-cultural differences when working for example with African-American or Hispanic clients. Homophobia is the, "...irrational fear or hatred of homosexuals or homosexuality," just as racism is the irrational fear and hatred of different races. Obviously a homophobic therapist would be unsuited to treat Gay men, Lesbians or Bisexuals just as racists would be unsuited to treat African-American clients. Oppression prevents self-expression and realization. Homosexuality is not a disorder or manifestation of one. It is an orientation and identity. "The causes of homosexuality, like the causes of heterosexuality, are unknown...", although recent studies of twins may reveal a genetic marker for homosexuality.

Balance is a work of art is seen as the goal of a mature artist. Balance in the art of our clients is seen as a symbol of mental health. Unity in diversity is a concept promoted in Fine Arts studio introductory classes as the epitome of good art organization. This is a useful concept to remember when working with any client but particularly our Gay men, Lesbian and Bisexual clients. It is our task to search out a client's particular rhythm, color and sensibility and to discover, based on a client's narrative and artwork issues that prevent the client from creating a balanced lifestyle. A Social Work axiom is relevant: "Start where the client is." Another useful model is the Therapeutic Community Model, an addiction treatment model where the client is seen as part of a larger whole that includes society as an imposing force creating a double-bind for addicts living in poverty stricken neighborhoods. After the addict receives treatment in a Therapeutic Community, an inpatient treatment facility, then returns to a hostile environment chances of a sober lifestyle are threatened by societal conditions. For our Gay male, Lesbian and Bisexual clients, society is homophobic and hostile to "alternative lifestyles" except in ghettos like Greenwich Village, N.Y.C. or San Francisco, Calif. therefore it is important to provide Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual resources for our clients such as the location of a Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual

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Gay, lesbian and bisexual people continue to face legal persecution in many parts of the United States. Fully one-half of the states have sodomy laws which make private sexual contact between consenting adults of the same gender illegal and punishable offenses. Nevada is one of those states having archaic statutes that violate basic human privacy.

Hence, the Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Caucus of AATA has devised an action that conference attendees might express their solidarity with gay, lesbian and bisexual people in their ongoing struggle to overturn sodomy laws. Attached are pink triangle stickers to wear on your name badge, so that, like the people of Denmark, you can express your resistance. We invite all who are so moved, to put a sticker on and wear it in symbolic protest.

• adapted from a card distributed at the 1991 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

The Lesbian,
Gay &
Bisexual
Caucus is looking
for articles & other
items for our
newsletter!
Anonymity will be
respected!

Send your submissions to
Barbara Levy c/o AATA
or to
Bill Brewer c/o
CCAT 622 W. 6th
Denver, CO 80204

Community Center, if one exists in your community, the location of Gay and Lesbian bookstores and books and articles about Gay men, Lesbians and Bisexuals that are non homophobic, the location of Gay-friendly therapist, doctors, lawyers and other professionals as well as the location of social networks and clubs. Most areas of the U.S. have resource directories for the Gay community, listing all of the above. There are national directories with the same kind of resources such as Gaia's Guide and International Places of Interest to Women (and Men).

Write to either Bill Brewer or myself with any concerns or ideas for a future successful Newsletter and Caucus. We are also accepting articles for submission to the Newsletter as well as logo idea. See you in Vegas!

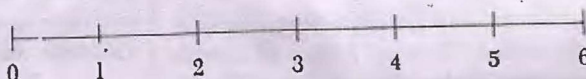
Sincerely,

Barbara Ann Levy

The Kinsey Scale and Klein's Sexual Orientation Scale Below are useful tool for determining and understanding the continuum of human sexuality.

- Self-identification. How do you identify yourself, in terms of sexual orientation, on the Kinsey Scale?

The answers to these questions are not static; instead, they should be viewed as dynamic in nature, having a past, a present, and a future.



0. Exclusively heterosexual.
1. Predominantly heterosexual, only incidentally homosexual.
2. Predominantly heterosexual, but more than incidentally homosexual.
3. Equally heterosexual and homosexual.
4. Predominantly homosexual, but more than incidentally heterosexual.
5. Predominantly homosexual, only incidentally heterosexual.
6. Exclusively homosexual.

Kinsey 0 rating	Exclusively other-sex oriented in behavior and psychological response	50
Kinsey 1 rating	Incidental same-sex behavior	15
Kinsey 2 rating	More than incidental same-sex behavior	12
Kinsey 3 rating	About equal amounts of same and other-sex behavior	9
Kinsey 4 rating	More than incidental other-sex behavior	6
Kinsey 5 rating	Incidental other-sex behavior	5
Kinsey 6 rating	Exclusively same-sex oriented in behavior and psychological response	4

He uses seven interrelated aspects of sexuality. These are:

- Sexual attraction. Who turns you on? Who do you find attractive as a real or potential sexual partner?
- Sexual behavior. Who are your sexual contacts (partners)?
- Sexual fantasies. Who do you enjoy fantasizing about in erotic daydreams?
- Emotional preference. With whom do you prefer to establish strong emotional bonds?
- Social preference. Which sex do you prefer to spend your leisure time with, and with which sex do you feel most comfortable?
- Lifestyle. With whom do you spend most of your daily free time?